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## **Senator Gilbert Applauds Supplemental Funding for M-24 Road Project**

*Gilbert to Conduct 'Priorities First' Public Information Hearings*

**(LANSING)** – State Senator Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac, today announced his support for “Priorities First,” legislation allowing for the restoration of critical road funding for 34 key road projects in Michigan, including M-24 in Lapeer County.

“Governor Granholm’s announcement regarding the suspension of the M-24 expansion project was a terrible blow to the residents of Lapeer County, and I am proud to announce that legislation has been introduced that will restore funding for this crucial project,” Gilbert, Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, said.

As part of the Governor’s “Preserve First” initiative, the Michigan Department of Transportation suspended 34 capacity improvement or Build Michigan III road projects to achieve its goal of having 90 percent of roads and bridges in good condition by 2007. Those deferments have upset the public, who have been eagerly expecting these projects to proceed as promised.

“Priorities First” sets a sharp contrast between the Senate plan for the future of economic development in Michigan and the Governor’s short-sighted, ambiguous plan.

“The “Preserve First” initiative may be short-sighted if capacity improvement projects are delayed until 90 percent of existing roads are rated in good condition,” Gilbert said. “Population growth and economic development throughout the state will continue to increase traffic congestion and jeopardize the safety of Michigan drivers.”

In addition, Senator Gilbert announced earlier this week he will conduct two “Priorities First” public information hearings to allow the public to voice their concerns over the Governor’s decision to suspend the 34 road projects.

The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hudsonville City Hall Commission Chambers, located at 3275 Central Blvd., in Hudsonville. The second meeting will be conducted Monday, May 5 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oakland County Commission Auditorium, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, in Pontiac.

Individuals interested in more information on the “Priorities First” hearings or the 34 deferment projects may contact Senator Gilbert’s office at (517) 373-7708.

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**Editor’s Note: Downloadable comments from Senator Gilbert regarding the “Priorities First” legislation and road repairs to M-24 are available on the Senate Majority audiowire at: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/index.htm>**